

IMMUNIZATION REGISTRY FOCUS GROUP STUDY

October 20, 1998

Monolingual Vietnamese Lower education

Pasadena, California

Moderator: Mai Tran

SECTION 1: GENERAL IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTHCARE

I. Prevention

Diseases mentioned:

- Hepatitis
- Polio

II. Immunization

A. Reasons not to get vaccinated

- Ignorance of immunization programs (especially for new arrivals to the U.S.)
- Not understanding the importance of immunizations
- Immunization is not a cure; only a preventative measure

B. Reasons to get vaccinated

- To prevent disease, especially a disease that could affect physical abilities (e.g., polio)

C. Ways parents are reminded of vaccine schedule

- Reminders from their doctor's office
- Reminder notes on health records

SECTION 2: IMMUNIZATION REGISTRIES

I. Initial reactions to the idea of a registry

Positive reactions:

- Respondents felt the registry was a good idea.
- They said it would be good for the Health Department to follow their children to make sure they are healthy.

Negative reactions/concerns:

- The Vietnamese respondents expressed no negative concerns.

Other concerns:

- The Vietnamese respondents expressed no other concerns about the immunization registry.

II. Content of the registries

A. Initial reactions to the type of information typically in a registry

- Overall, respondents thought the registry was a practical idea.
- They were positive about the inclusion of the date and type of vaccine and any possible reactions.
- Respondents said that, for those on MediCal, all information was already on record.

B. Reactions to including home address and phone number

- Respondents felt the inclusion of this information would present no problems for them.
- Generally, they felt that this information was already public.

C. Reactions to including parent or child Social Security number

- Overall, respondents believed that this information was already in their medical records.
- They would object to the inclusion of this information only if access to the information was unrestricted.
- They expressed some concern about using the parents' Social Security numbers. They thought this availability of their own Social Security number might open them up to possible fraud (e.g., someone else applying for credit cards using their numbers).
- They were positive about the inclusion of the child's Social Security number.
- One respondent said, "*In America, they know all about you.*"

D. Reactions to including healthcare members enrollment (WIC, MediCal numbers)

- Overall, respondents were receptive to this idea. They thought it would accelerate access to health information and reduce paperwork.

III. Access

A. *Who should have access*

- Parents
- Health agencies
- Government personnel in health-related fields
- Doctors
- Schools
- Emergency rooms
- MediCal and WIC offices

B. *Who should not have access*

- The public
- People who have nothing to do with the child's welfare or health
- Health insurance companies

C. *Computer links*

Respondents said the these computer links would be good for:

- Researching diseases
- Providing quick access for doctors
- Noting allergic reactions
- Accessing information when traveling
- Medical emergencies

IV. *Consent and Inclusion*

A. *Reactions to “opting out” option*

- Respondents like this option because it provides a choice.
- Because their children were included unless they took specific action, they found this to be convenient and to save time.
- Respondents said that it would be convenient for the doctor to know their children's immunization history.
- Most respondents felt that anything that contributes to public health is fine.

B. *Reactions to “consent” option*

- Overall, respondents felt that this option is too time-consuming.

- They also thought that language barriers might prohibit some people from replying to the notices

C. Reactions to “automatic” option

- Most respondents like this option and considered that it showed that the government is concerned for the health of their children.
- Some respondents objected to the lack of choice in options but agreed that it would be beneficial for their children.
- Others felt this policy would be good because it followed and protected their children’s health.

SECTION 3: WRAP UP AND CLOSING

I. Most important benefit(s) of registries

- Easy access to health information when children transfer schools
- Access to medical records in case of emergencies

II. Greatest concern(s)/biggest risk(s)

- Inappropriate people having access to information (especially the parents’ Social Security numbers)

III. Influence of healthcare provider in decision to participate in a registry

- Most respondents said they trust their doctors and that doctors would influence their decision to participate in the registry.

IV. Suggestions/comments to people who are responsible for how system works

Please make the information for this program available to others. This program is excellent for the health of the public.

After being exposed to this program, I totally agreed with it. There are many benefits for the children as well as for the parents.

The people would benefit a lot from this program. However, please make sure that the information is confidential and that the people’s privacy can be protected. Only release the information that pertains to immunization.

This is a wonderful program...It shows that the American health organization is caring for the public’s health. Thank you very much. I greatly appreciate this.”

This meeting today was very informative – some good advise from the government that was greatly appreciated. This is to protect the health of the children. The registry system will help to eliminate the paper work process. It is quicker and easier when we need help, and it saves time.